

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 SR-02 ORM-01 SCA-01 IO-10

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AGR-05 SWF-01

OMB-01 IGA-01 /080 W

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R 220610Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8577

INFO CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

DEPARTMENT PASS AID ALSO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, RP

SUBJECT: REFUGEE FATALITIES IN MINDANAO

BEGIN SUMMARY: PHILIPPINE RED CROSS OFFICIALS IN MANILA  
CONFIRM ASSOCIATED PRESS REPORT THAT 44 MUSLIM REFUGEES  
HAVE DIED AS RESULT OF DISEASE AND MALNUTRITION IN AREAS  
OF CENTRAL MINDANAO WHERE FIGHTING HEAVY IN RECENT MONTHS.  
THEY SAY POOR CONDITION OF REFUGEES PARTLY DUE TO SLUGGISH  
ACTION BY SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT IN FACING PROBLEM OF  
GREAT SEVERITY. THEY EMPHASIZE THAT CONDITIONS AS BAD OR  
WORSE AMONG CHRISTIAN REFUGEES WHO ARE APPROXIMATELY FOUR  
TIMES AS NUMEROUS IN AREA AS MUSLIMS. END SUMMARY

2. ACCORDING ASSOCIATED PRESS STORY OF NOVEMBER 19 (WHICH  
CITES "RED CROSS SOURCES") AT LEAST 44 PERSONS HAVE DIED  
OF DISEASE AND MALNUTRITION IN THREE CAMPS FOR 3,244  
MUSLIM REFUGEES, MOSTLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN, DISPLACED  
BY GOVERNMENT SWEEPS IN MINDANAO IN PAST MONTHS. AREAS  
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MENTIONED IN STORY (BALIAGNO, LIBUA AND KULONG-KULONG)

ARE ON SOUTH COAST OF SULTAN KUDARAT PROVINCE (MILBUK-PALIMBANG AREA). ACCORDING STORY, REPORTED DEATHS DID NOT INCLUDE THOSE FROM "NATURAL CAUSES." IT STATES THAT ABOUT HALF THE REFUGEES ILL AND WELFARE WORKERS SHORT OF ANTI-BIOTICS AND MEDICINES. STORY MENTIONS THAT REFUGEES AT TAGADTAL (850 PERSONS) FLED KULONG-KULONG AFTER ARMY DRPBE AGAINST REBELS SUSPECTED OF AMBUSHING WORKERS ON NEARBY WEYERHAEUSER CONCESSION.

3. MANILA PHILIPPINE RED CROSS SOURCES TOLD USAID OFFICIAL NOVEMBER 21 THAT STORY SUBSTANTIALLY ACCURATE AND SIAD THAT RED CROSS HAD RECEIVED REPORTS OF FORTY-FIVE (SIC) DEATHS FROM THEIR LOCAL RED CROSS REPRESENTATIVES IN FIELD MORE THAN TWO WEEKS AGO. SOURCES BLAME PROBLEM ON 1) GREAT RESEVERITY OF PROBLEM, WITH ADDITIONAL REFUGEES BEING GENERATED IN NEW AND UMPREDICTABLE LOCATIONS BY EVERY MILITARY CLASH AND 2) SLUGGISH ACTION ON THE PART OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT WHICH SEEMS INCAPABLE OF MOVING WHAT SUPPLIES ARE AVAILABLE TO AREAS WHERE NEEDED. FOR EXAMPLE USAID AWARE THAT ABOUT SIX MONTHS AGO WORLD FOOD PROGRAM (UN) MADE AVAILABLE 900 TONS OF FOOD FOR REFUGEES, BUT IT NEVER LEFT MANILA UNTIL CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE FINALLY TOOK OVER DISTRIBUTION.

4. PHILIPPINE RED CROSS OFFICIAL SAID THAT BULK OF WHATEVER IS GEING DONE FOR REFUGEES IS BEING DONE BY LOCAL MILITARY, AND THAT THIS NOT INCONSIDERABLE (ALTHOUGH CLEARLT NOT ADEQUATE TO MEET PROBLEM). RED CROSS IS ALSO HELPING BUT ITS RESOURCES EXTREMELY LIMITED. OFFICIAL EMPHASIZED THAT ALTHOUGH WHAT RELIEF AVAILABLE IS CHANNELLED PRIMARILY TO MUSLIMS, SITUATION AMONG CHRISTIAN REFUGEES WHO ARE APPROXIMATELY FOUR TIMES AS NUMEROUS IS JUST AS BAD. (ACCORDING INFORMATION FURNISHED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO STAFFDEL MOOSE/MEISSNER WHEN THEY RECENTLY VISITED COTABATO, A TOTAL OF 357,041 REFUGEES HAVE BEEN GENERATED UP TO OCTOBER 31, 1974 IN NORTH COTABATO, MAGUINDANAO, SULTAN KUDARAT AND SOUTH COTABATO PROVINCES; OF THESE 70,373 RESETTLED AND 69,365 RETURNED TO DATE. OF TOTAL, 293,273 ARE CHRISTIAN AND 63,768 ARE MUSLIMS.

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5. IN YEARS PAST MINDANOA-SULU RELIEF EFFORTS INCLUDED CONSIDERABLE INPUT US VOLUNTARY AGENCIES FOOD-FOR PEACE COMMODITIES AND MEDICINES, AND THERE ARE STILL LIMITED, ONGOING NUTRIBUN PROGRAMS FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN IN JOLO, BASILAN, ZAMBOANGA, COTABATO CITY AND PAGADIANM IN ADDITION, GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA HAS MADE AVAILABLE SEVERAL THOUSAND TONS OF FLOUR EACH YEAR TO AUGMENT GOP RELIEF SUPPLIES. HOWEVER PROGNOSIS FOR CONTINUING AID

SEEMS BLEAKER AS WORLD FOOD SITUATION TIGHTENS. AS RESULT, RELIEF EFFORTS WHICH NEVER ADEQUATE FOR PROBLEM,

ARE LIKELY TO WEAKEN FURTHER. EFFORTS OF ISLAMIC RELIEF AGENCY WHICH SUPPOSEDLY BEING FUNDED BY ARAB COUNTRIES TO TUNE OF UWP MILLION AT BEHEST OF KUALA LUMPUR CONFERENCE MIGHT HELP SOMEWHAT, IF RPT IF IT EVER GETS OFF THE GROUND.

6. COMMENT: ALL EXTERNAL AID CONTRIBUTIONS TO REFUGEE PROBLEM ARE INSIGNIFICANT IN COMPARISON TO NEED. MINDANOA-SULU FIGHTING OVER PAST 2-3 YEARS HAS GENERATED TOTAL OF OVER A MILLION REFUGEES. WHILE MANY HAVE BEEN

ABLE TO RETURN TO HOME AREAS, THERE ARE STILL PERHAPS HALF A MILLION WHO ARE LIVING IN PRIVATION INCLUDING SOME CHRISTIANS WHO HAVE RETURNED TO ORIGINAL NATIVE AREAS OUTSIDE MINDANOA WHERE MANY ARE NOW IN SQUATTER SLUMS. NO MORE THAN 30-40,000 ARE DEPENDENT ON GOVERNMENT OR OTHER OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE AT ANY ONE TIME, IF ONLY BECAUSE RHUTSIDE RESOURCES ARE NOT ADEQUATE TO SUPPORT MORE.

7. WHILE PHILIPPINE RED CROSS CONTINUES TO HELP, ITS EFFORTS ARE NECESSARILY KEYED TO MOST SERIOUS CRISIS SITUATIONS. WITH REGARD TO MORE COMPREHENSIVE LONG-RANGE EFFORTS TO SOLVE REFUGEE PROBLEM, GOP HAS DONE SOME EXCELLENT PLANNING. IMPLEMENTATION HAS BEEN VERY LIMITED MAINLY FOR LACK OF BOTH MATERIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES. GOP MAY ALSO BE HELD BACK BY FEELING THAT PUTTING REFUGEES ON WHAT COULD EASILY BECOME PERMANENT DOLE WOULD ALSO BE UNDESIRABLE. IN SHORT, WHILE AP REPORT OF REFUGEE FATALITIES WILL HOPEFULLY STIMULATE SOME INCREASED ATTENTION TO MOST CRITICAL AREAS, IT WILL

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NOT WE FEAR CAUSE GOP TO COME TO GRIPS WITH ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT PROBLEMS GENERATED BY MINDANAO STRIFE.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REFUGEES, MOSLEMS, DEATHS  
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**Draft Date:** 22 NOV 1974  
**Decapton Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** CollinP0  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**TAGS:** PINT, RP  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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